

School Counseling in South Korea: Historical Development, Current Status, and Prospects

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School counseling in South Korea faces new challenges in implementation. Despite a rapid increase in the number of school counselors, a generally agreed consensus on training, ethical standards, role identity, counseling model, and structures for school counselors has not been reached. This article reviews a brief history of school counseling in South Korea and describes its current status. Discussions of contemporary issues and future prospects for school counseling in South Korea are included.

According to J. W. Lee (2001), an estimated 25.8% of Korean students (about 54,611 students) exhibit behavioral or social and emotional problems, including many with a learning disability or with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). About 26% of students are also addicted to the Internet and other computer-related activities. In addition, more than 90% of middle- and high-school students report having witnessed bullying in their schools (Korean Youth Counseling Institute [KYCI], 2006), and it is estimated that

approximately 60% of youths in South Korea are involved in bullying either as a victim, as a bully, or both (KYCI, 2006). As societal problems grow in South Korea, school violence has become a salient issue (T. Kim, Lee, Yu, Lee, & Puig, 2005). The extent of emotional problems is illustrated by the fact that suicide is the leading cause of death among teenagers in South Korea.

Despite persistent remedial efforts, adolescent problems continue to grow and are also becoming evident among younger age groups in South Korea (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 1999). According to the Korea Education Policy Institute (2006), if there were no prevention efforts, the violence problems evident among children and youth could create an astronomical amount of societal costs in the future. In addition, the increasing complexity of problems facing today's youth and families suggests that new ways of preventive interventions are needed. School counseling services thus have a major role to play. Good counseling service leads students to develop positive self-image and in turn, satisfying relationships with friends and others. Having good counselors in the school system helps children and youths make good decisions and deal with life's challenges. It is not uncommon for teenagers to develop problems with their mental health (APA Help Center, 2008). Unfortunately, most young people with mental health problems had so far not received appropriate treatment in South Korea. To prevent growing school violence and adolescents' mental health problems, in 2005, new school counseling legislation was passed through Congress for establishing school counselors' positions within school settings.

Despite the long history of school counseling in South Korea, the introduction of a specialized model within the profession that focuses exclusively on school counseling is a recent endeavor (S. M. Lee, Oh, & Suh, 2007). Newly employed professional school counselors voiced the need for the development of a Korean school counseling model which

could give answers to such questions as who should do what, when, and how. Therefore, it is important to scrutinize the historical development and current status of school counseling in South Korea and discuss the future agendas and prospects by examining the role and responsibilities of school counselors.

This article has several objectives. First, it presents the historical development and current trends of school counseling related specifically to South Korea and discusses the problems that have limited the impact of school counselors throughout its history. Second, this article describes the factors that have impacted on the development of the school counseling profession and presents the issues that have been raised in the Korean school counseling field. Lastly, the prospects for school counseling (for example, societal and cultural issues that are important to consider when implementing models of school counseling practices) will be discussed.

History of School Counseling in South Korea

Careful examination of the past illuminates the present and suggests patterns for the future (H. D. Lee & Seol, 1993). The history of school counseling in South Korea reflects continuous changes and progressive development, just as is true of other Asian countries. School counseling in South Korea had its inception in the 1950s when the United States Educational Delegation initiated educational missions in South Korea (Yoo, 1996). During three visits from 1952 to 1962, the United States Educational Delegation taught Korean educators about new counseling and guidance theories and methods, which were different from the traditional discipline approaches in use at that time (e.g., corporal punishment). These activities gave rise to progressive movements that initiated the 1963 Education Act from the Ministry of Education (now the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology [MEST]). The 1963 Education Act stated, *inter alia*, that “middle and high schools need

to have disciplinary guidance teachers.” Although this education policy guideline created an influx of counseling and guidance teachers in school and training programs in school districts, the role of the disciplinary guidance teachers was very ill-defined and provided little direction (S. M. Lee, Oh, et al., 2007). In 1990, the Ministry of Education changed the title of the disciplinary guidance teacher into “career counseling teacher” while building a career counseling department in each local school board. Although the title was changed, there were no major differences between disciplinary guidance teachers and career counseling teachers in terms of their perceived roles.

Within this era of undefined roles for counseling teachers, most of them were given teaching assignments (about 18 hours per week) that were almost the same as those of regular teachers. In addition, it was common for senior teachers to take only two or three counseling courses (about 360 hours) and then be able to apply for certification as counseling teachers. Therefore, applicants did not know much about the nature of counseling and related job skills and services, nor did they have a clear idea of the role of a guidance specialist in the schools. Many counseling teachers still used the traditional discipline approaches and were seen as disciplinarians. Without adequate preparation and well-defined counseling and guidance programs, many counseling teachers drifted into quasi-administrative positions (S. M. Lee & Ahn, 2003).

In 1997, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Ministry of Education, 1999) led to a training system for registered professional school counseling teachers. Again, the title was changed from career counseling teacher to professional school counseling teacher. Up to 2006, about 24,845 registered school counseling teachers were trained and certified by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (H. D. Kim, 2007). However, many registered school counseling teachers were not appointed as school counselors. Only a

few schools employ full-time counselors, but most certified counselors still need to teach about 18 hours of regular classes weekly. Therefore, many teachers saw obtaining this new certification as a step toward becoming a school principal and opted to work in an administrative role when given the opportunity (S. M. Lee, Oh, et al., 2007).

In 2004, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development recognized this problem and determined that a full-time specialist in guidance and counseling was needed in schools. At that time, the newly revised 2004 Elementary and Secondary School Education Act (ESSEA), which included school counseling sections, had a major impact on the school counseling profession. ESSEA provided federal funds to local school boards to develop school counseling services and to universities to train school counselors. First, in 2005, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development developed plans to single out 308 full-time, registered school counselors as the itinerant school counselors who would be assigned to each school board. In addition, given the advent of the “no violence in schools act,” the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development started to place full-time school counseling teachers as school counselors in secondary schools. In 2007, 175 school counselors were placed in public schools and 180 school counselors in private schools. In 2008, MEST gradually expanded this policy and placed another 132 school counselors in public schools. Currently, in Korean schools, “school counselors” refers to the certified teachers who were trained as “professional school counseling teachers” (K. H. Kim, 2004).

Current Status

In South Korea, school counselors play an important role in fostering the emotional and social development of children during their formative years. School counselors advocate for students and work with other individuals and organizations to promote the academic, career,

personal, and social development of children and youth (S. M. Lee, 2004). School counselors use interviews, counseling sessions, interest and aptitude assessment tests, and other methods to evaluate and advise students. They also operate career information centers and career education programs. Up to 2007, school counselors of school boards, middle schools, and high schools held a total of 485 jobs. Of the school counselors in those jobs, about 306 are school board school counselors, 47 are middle school counselors, 110 are vocational high school counselors, and 22 are general high school counselors. Currently, the vast majority work in school boards and vocational high schools. Employment of school counselors is geographically distributed much the same as the population.

Work Environment

Counseling students to help them develop new skills and gain an appreciation of knowledge and learning can be very rewarding. However, counseling may be frustrating when one is dealing with unmotivated or disrespectful students. Due to the relatively short tradition of school counseling in South Korea, occasionally, school counselors must cope with less cooperative attitudes and responses in the school from some teachers and administrators as well as students. Recently, according to H. D. Kim (2007), school counselors reported that they experienced stress in dealing with heavy workloads, conflict with co-workers (teachers and administrators), and role ambiguity. Moreover, South Korean school counselors are sometimes isolated from their school colleagues because they work alone within the school (H. D. Kim, 2007).

Many school counselors work more than 40 hours a week. This includes performance of school duties (i.e., paper work) besides counseling tasks. While school counselors in middle and high schools work for 9–10 months in a traditional school year with summer and winter vacations of 2–3 months, school counselors in the school board

work about 11–12 months without long vacation. School counselors obtain tenure after they have passed the national certification examination for school counselors. School counselors' tenure laws prevent school counselors from being fired without just cause and due process. Therefore, tenure does provide security for school counselors in South Korea.

Training, Qualifications, and Advancement

Since 2008, the route to becoming a school counselor involves completing a bachelor's degree from a counseling-related department (e.g., psychology department) or completing a master's degree from the counseling program of a graduate school of education and then obtaining a school counseling teacher certification. In addition, from 2006 to 2007, MEST temporarily offered alternative routes to certification (short counseling certification training courses of about 6–12 months) for those who have a teacher's certificate. Traditional education programs for school counselors include courses designed specifically for those preparing to apply. These courses include psychological assessment, personality psychology, counseling students with disabilities, group counseling, family counseling, and career counseling as well as counseling theory and practice. In addition, students need to experience a 4-week practicum, which are partnerships between universities and middle or high schools. Practicum experiences merge theory with practice and allow the student to experience a school counselor's tasks firsthand, under professional guidance and supervision.

MEST requires public school counselors to be certified. Teachers may be certified to work at both middle or high school and school board. Applicants for a school counselor's certification should be tested for competence and basic knowledge in education, such as educational philosophy, curriculum and instruction, educational psychology, educational administration, or educational sociology. In addition, school

counselors need to exhibit proficiency in counseling subjects. MEST is presently moving toward implementing performance-based systems for school counselor certification, which usually require applicants to demonstrate satisfactory counseling performance through an in-depth interviewing process in addition to passing a paper-based examination. Finally, for professional development, MEST requires school counselors to complete a minimum number of hours of continuing education to renew their certification.

Current Challenges

Increased awareness of societal needs has resulted in greater attention to matters of school counseling, and has contributed to the increased number of school counselors and supporting policies. Unfortunately, this rapid quantitative growth in the field of school counseling is now creating new challenges. We will review several concerns raised by both researchers and practitioners in school counseling.

Training Issues

The major training issue for a school counselor is the limited practicum experience in school counseling. School counselors need to perform a variety of counseling services for students, teachers, and parents. The successful performance of these services depends not only on a strong knowledge base but also on clinical skills obtained through experiential learning. As discussed earlier, the current qualification requires a 4-week practicum. When compared to the 700-hour practicum requirement of the U.S. school counselors, this appears to be insufficient to allow enough opportunities for developing clinical skills and understanding practical issues in school counseling (Eun & Kim, 2004; Yu, 2007).

Moreover, systematic supervision for the school counseling practicum has not been offered (Yu, 2007). In most cases, school

counseling practicum is supervised by the course instructor in university settings. However, this cannot offer in-depth supervision due to the limited time and frequency. Additionally, supervision by the instructors in university settings raises a concern (Seashore, Jones, & Seppanen, 2001) because these instructors may not be able to respond sensitively to certain supervision issues that are unique to each school setting. The absence of field supervisors can compromise the effective training of school counselors and, more importantly, the ethical practice of school counselor trainees.

The multiple routes for becoming a school counselor also raise a concern for the qualification of school counselors. Currently, school counselor applicants need to have either a bachelor's degree or a master's degree in counseling-related programs. This may broaden the opportunities of an applicant to become a school counselor, yet may create differences in the level of expertise. For this reason, some argued that the preferential weight should be given to those with a master's degree (Hong, 2007). This concern warrants future effort to carefully define the expertise of school counselors and to examine the current curriculum for school counseling training programs.

Ethical Issues

The absence of unified ethical standards also creates difficulties for school counselors. Ethical practice cannot be overemphasized, yet the attention to the ethical standards of school counselors is limited. Currently, ethical standards specifically for school counselors have not yet been developed. Due to this lack of guidelines, school counselors are recommended to refer to the code of ethic for general counselors prescribed by the professional counseling associations such as the Korean Counseling Psychological Association or the one prescribed by the American School Counselor Association (H. D. Kim, 2007).

However, the practical values of these ethical standards are limited because they are not developed based on the consideration of unique situations in Korean school settings. For example, maintaining confidentiality can be more challenging for school counselors in South Korea. Traditionally, teachers tended to perform a counseling role, though in a limited capacity, prior to the introduction of school counselors, and teachers are still closely involved with the personal and social issues of students. This often helps school counselors to get support from teachers, yet also makes it challenging to preserve confidentiality. Record keeping is also of concern. The lack of consensus on the ethical practice of record keeping creates confusion about how to keep the record for how long and who has access to the counseling records. The development of the ethical standards and training in dealing with ethical dilemmas are critical for school counselors in South Korea.

Role Identity Issues

The lack of a clear definition of school counselors' role identity is another challenge that needs to be addressed. School counselors have been consistently reporting role ambiguity as a major problem in the current school counseling system (H. D. Kim, 2007). School counselors may regard their primary role as an advocate for students, yet in reality they are faced with non-counseling-related activities such as administrative work (H. D. Kim, 2007). Some school administrators define the role of school counselors simply as disciplining students (S. M. Lee, Oh, et al., 2007).

Role ambiguity of school counselors is closely related to the different expectations from regional school boards, school administrators, teachers, and school counselors themselves about the roles and activities of school counselors (S. M. Lee, Oh, et al., 2007). Some narrowly define the role of school counselors as working with students with adjustment

problems via individual and group counseling and psychological assessments, leaving the role of guidance and parent consultation to teachers (Shin, Kim, & Lyu, 2004). Others agree that school counselors should perform a wide range of roles and activities as proposed by Western school counseling models (Bowers & Hatch, 2005; Gysbers & Henderson, 2006), but they have different definitions and priorities in these roles and activities (Keum, 2007; S. M. Lee, Oh, et al., 2007). According to Keum (2007), school counselors often have ideal views on their roles but are confronted by the demand for administrative work or clinical expertise beyond their training.

Role expectations of school counselors also differ based on the developmental stages of students. The development and implementation of school guidance programs is perceived to be most important in primary schools (Huh & Park, 2005), and counseling of students with adjustment problems is viewed as a crucial role in middle schools (Kang, Son, & Cho, 2005b). In high schools where college entrance and job search are important goals, greater demand is placed on academic and career counseling (Kang, Son, & Cho, 2005a).

The heterogeneous teaching backgrounds of school counselors complicate role identity issues further. Currently, some school counselors have prior experience in teaching, while others became school counselors immediately after graduating from college. This difference in teaching experience appears to create different expectations of roles and activities (Keum, 2007). Thus, it is imperative to acknowledge the distinctive roles of school counselors from those of counselors or teachers, and to develop a new model for school counselors' roles and identity.

School Counseling Model Issues

Related to the role ambiguity of school counselors, school counseling models are also undetermined at the present time. As stated earlier, the

increased severity of students' psychological and behavioral problems created the need for specialized school counseling. Thus, it is not surprising to observe that the primary focus of school counseling has been devoted to responsive services such as individual or group counseling on mental health issues (H. D. Kim, 2007).

However, this remedial model inevitably has limitations in meeting the needs of all students in schools. While it is important to deal with psychological and behavioral problems of students, intensive individual and group counseling can be provided to only a limited number of students, leaving little time for the majority of students (Martin, 2002). School counselors already report heavy workloads as a major stressor (H. D. Kim, 2007), and the student-to-school counselor ratio in South Korea is far higher than the 250-to-1 ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association (2008a). This current model also limits the scope of school counseling to personal and social deficits with little attention to academic and career needs. It suggests that the remedial model of school counseling may have only partial efficacy for a limited number of students.

In order to address the limitation issue of the current remedial model, alternatives should be carefully considered. For example, school counseling in the United States evolved into a comprehensive and developmental model (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006) to address the similar issue. This model focuses on all students, not just those with problems, with the emphasis on academic, career, and personal/social development, though it also acknowledges responsive services such as individual and group counseling as an important component. It emphasizes preventive interventions such as providing a guidance curriculum. The implications of this comprehensive model for Korean school counseling are considered in more detail later under the section "Future Prospects."

Structuring Issues

Finally, limited support and resources create significant difficulties for school counselors in South Korea. According to S. M. Lee, Oh, et al. (2007), teachers may perceive referring a student to counseling as an indication of their own incompetence, and may therefore be hesitant in working with school counselors. Such a perception can contribute to school counselors' conflicts with school faculty members and feeling of isolation (H. D. Kim, 2007). Any lack of support from school systems hinders school counselors from working efficiently with students.

The lack of community-based support is another facet of this challenge. Without the support, the scope of services that can be provided by school counselors is limited. Actually, this is a challenge for any type of counselors or practitioners. For this reason, it is essential that they have community-based resources for referrals and consultation. However, the development of these community-based resources at this time relies primarily on the personal effort of school counselors, and without administrative support, this personal effort can be limited. The general lack of support from both school systems and communities can discourage school counselors who entered this field with enthusiasm and compassion.

Future Prospects

The effective implementation of school counseling calls for more sophisticated approaches to the current policies and models of school counseling. The aforementioned challenges can offer directions for future school counseling.

Competence-based Training

The education of school counselors should be based on clearly defined competence. Unfortunately, the current training is focused on

building a knowledge base for a counselor or private practitioner with little consideration of experiential learning or unique demands in school settings (S. M. Lee, Oh, et al., 2007). The Transforming School Counseling Initiative (TSCI) model can offer useful guidelines for addressing these limitations. The TSCI model emphasizes the graduate-level training of school counselors in the knowledge of schools and school systems, the ability to facilitate students' educational, career, and personal development with an emphasis on strengths, and the capacities to generate systemic changes in schools (Romano, Goh, & Wahl, 2005). This model offers new visions and future directions for transforming school counselor training, specifically for developing explicit abilities (Martin, 2002), student recruitment (Hanson & Stone, 2002), and curriculum (Hayes & Paisley, 2002).

The TSCI model has implications for school counselor training in South Korea. Curriculum should be carefully reexamined and redesigned to tap into distinctive training needs of school counselors. Traditional training models for mental health practitioners or teachers cannot serve as a basis for school counselor training. The education of school counselors need to focus not only on counseling processes but also on school systems (Martin, 2002). It is particularly important to prepare school counselor trainees without teaching experience to work effectively within school systems, although extensive classroom teaching experience may not be a prerequisite for school counselors.

The curriculum of school counselors should include both lecture/seminar sessions and experiential training. While lectures, seminars, workshops, and private study provide necessary knowledge, the practicum experience assists trainees, especially those without experience in school systems, to be aware of the discrepancies between knowledge and practice in school settings. Relevant and successful practicum experience requires collaborative supervision by both the instructors in universities and school

counselors in the field. This can only be achieved by close partnership between school counselor training programs and schools (Romano et al., 2005).

Finally, ethical issues in school counseling should be considered in reexamining current training of school counselors. The first step involves developing ethical standards for school counselors that can represent unique school culture and ethical issues confronting school counselors in South Korea. Training in ethical issues should not just include helping trainees to be knowledgeable about ethical standards. It is also crucial to help them become aware of ethical principles and be prepared for possible ethical dilemmas they are likely to face in school settings.

Role Identity of School Counselors

Reaching a consensus on roles and activities of school counselors is important for fully effective performance of school counselors. Although it is generally assumed that school counselors perform unique roles and activities, exactly what roles and activities they perform is unclear (S. M. Lee, Oh, et al., 2007). A clear definition of school counselors' roles can help decrease the discrepancies in role expectations among school administrators, teachers, students, and school counselors themselves, hence creating the basis for collaboration in school systems.

Roles of school counselors are defined based on the specific contextual backgrounds. School counselors in the United States are considered as integral members of staff to generate systemic school changes addressing academic, career, and personal goals and strengths of students, moving away from traditional roles of "helper" (American School Counselor Association, 2008b). In Hong Kong, school counseling is implemented by teams of classroom teachers (Yuen, 2006), while school counselors in Japan are mental health experts exclusively focusing on intervening in psychological, developmental, and behavioral

problems (Zaffuto, 2005). The differences in school counseling in other countries suggest that roles of school counselors in South Korea also need to be defined to reflect social and cultural context.

An aspect to be considered is the societal need to deal with mental health problems and violence in schools. As stated earlier, the increase in psychological and behavioral problems of adolescents is the major reason for establishing school counselors in South Korea. Thus, it is not surprising that many assume that the unique role of school counselors is a specialist to deal with students with adjustment or behavioral problems (Shin et al., 2004). Another aspect to consider involves the specific needs displayed by students at different developmental stages (Huh & Park, 2005; Kang et al., 2005a, 2005b). Distinctive developmental needs require school counselors to change their priorities in roles and activities, ranging from guidance teachers to responsive service providers to academic and career counselors.

Considering these, the roles of school counselors should be distinctive from those in other countries. The current problems in schools require school counselors to be expert in dealing with psychological and behavioral problems of students with preventive and responsive interventions. School counselors also need to serve as gatekeepers to detect serious problems and make necessary referrals. Moreover, school counselors should assume unified but flexible roles and activities. It is important that school counselors are equipped to perform a wide range of activities to promote academic, career, and personal/social development of students. It is more important that they develop the abilities to prioritize roles and activities to respond sensitively to unique needs at diverse developmental stages of students.

Establishing school counselors' roles is an integral component of managing successful school counseling in South Korea. However,

different groups in school systems (e.g., school administrators, teachers, students, school counselors) interpret the roles of school counselors differently, and some roles may be more important to a certain group. Due to these different expectations, it is possible that these multiple roles will often be in conflict with one another due to limited time or resources. For this reason, the collaboration of diverse groups in the school system is particularly important in defining the roles and activities of school counselors. With clear roles, school counselors can function much more effectively in school systems, collaborate with other school personnel, and enhance their professional identity.

Comprehensive School Counseling Model

The reconsideration of school counseling models can improve the effectiveness of school counseling. The current model is restrictive because it centers mainly on provision of responsive services with a focus on adjustment problems. Such a model can have only limited impact on students' overall development. For this reason, current school counseling models should be reexamined and modified to focus on the needs of all students. Although responsive services will still be an important element, the current model lacks a systematic organization encompassing developmental as well as remedial approaches.

As already mentioned, a comprehensive school guidance and counseling program (e.g., Gysbers & Henderson, 2006) can serve as a guiding framework for developing a Korean school counseling model. This model specifies the domains of student development and the delivery system. The domains of student development comprise academic, career, and personal/social development. Academic development focuses on assisting students to develop positive academic attitudes and skills necessary for academic success. Career development involves facilitating students' knowledge and skills in career planning (such as students' understanding of self, knowledge in occupations, and career decision-

making skills). Finally, personal and social development deals with enhancing students' self-concept and interpersonal functioning.

The delivery system defines the activities of school counselors to address academic, career, and personal/social development. Guidance curriculum is based on structured classroom lessons integrated into students' overall curriculum. Individual planning is designed to assist students to develop and achieve personal goals based on individualized assessment. Responsive services include counseling activities, consultation, and referrals to deal with students' difficulties interfering with development. Finally, system support relates to the activities necessary for the effective administration and management of overall school counseling.

The comprehensive school guidance and counseling program (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006) is a valuable example but it should be considered in the context of unique situations and needs in South Korea (Romano et al., 2005). One aspect to be considered is the increase in students' psychological and behavioral problems in South Korea (T. Kim et al., 2005; KYCI, 2006; J. W. Lee, 2001). School counselors have been addressing this issue with a remedial approach which emphasizes deficits of a few students. With the framework of this comprehensive school guidance and counseling program, the current remedial approach can transform into a proactive and preventive approach addressing personal and social development. Although the delivery of responsive services may still be important, the incorporation of preventive activities such as guidance curriculum can expand the scope and efficacy of school counseling (Ahn, 2005). The great emphasis on students' academic achievement also needs to be considered in devising a school counseling model in South Korea (S. M. Lee, Yu, & Lee, 2005). Though facilitating students' academic development is an essential component of school counseling (Martin, 2002), school counseling in South Korea has so far tended to neglect it. As a result, school counseling becomes an auxiliary

separated from student education in schools. The school counseling model in South Korea should acknowledge and integrate academic development as a vital domain to elicit the full collaboration of teachers and become an integral part of the education system.

Development of Systemic Support

The full implementation of school counseling should be supported by the school system and communities. Within the school system, school counselors need to work with school administrators and teachers with a shared vision in education and student development. The roles of school counselors should be considered complementary to (rather than competing with) the roles of school administrators and teachers. To achieve collaboration, school counselors should understand the needs of, and provide support for, school administrators and teachers (House & Hayes, 2002).

Support within the school system can be further strengthened by including school administrators and classroom teachers in the development and implementation of school counseling. The “whole school approach” to school counseling in Hong Kong can be a good example (Yuen, 2002). In Hong Kong, guidance teachers perform the roles of school counselors, but all classroom teachers are also a part of school counseling teams, providing guidance activities. Considering Korean culture where all teachers assume the responsibilities of personal and academic development of students, school counselors can maximize the systemic support by actively soliciting the participation of school administrators and teachers in school counseling programs.

School counselors also need to strengthen the relationship with community-based resources. School counselors should be aware of referral resources in the community and maintain strong relationships with them to ensure the ongoing care of referred students. The

relationships with researchers and other school counselors can also provide support and facilitate exchange of knowledge. Currently, experts in academic fields and school counselors in certain regions have regular consultation meetings as an attempt to facilitate the communication between academics and school counselors as well as among school counselors. Such endeavors can play an important role in establishing an atmosphere that is conducive to school counseling.

Conclusion

School counseling in South Korea has a long history since the 1950s, yet the endeavor for specialized school counseling has only been recently introduced. Societal awareness of psychological and behavioral problems in school settings is followed by the intensive effort to secure professional school counselors to be assigned in each school. This intensive effort results in a rapid increase of school counselors and school counseling services for students.

School counseling in South Korea is now facing new challenges in implementation. The initial task for renewed school counseling initiatives was to secure adequate personnel to provide the service, but the current task is to ensure that personnel are adequately trained. The expertise and identity of school counselors should be established through competence-based training and clearly defined roles. A comprehensive and flexible framework for school counseling is required to help school counselors perform their roles and deal with practical issues in school settings. Internal and external support systems can enhance the performance of school counselors.

In order to address these challenges, rigorous research on school counseling in South Korea is essential. For example, research on competence of school counselors can clarify concerns regarding training of school counselors. The consensus on the level and areas of competence

for school counselors can offer direction for training programs and qualifications. Another area of research concerns the development and validation of a school counseling model. Researchers have argued that a comprehensive school counseling model is especially important for the success of school counseling (S. M. Lee, Oh, et al., 2007). Defining contextualized school counseling models, and developing measure to assess the efficacy of these models are necessary foundations. Such a research endeavor will help to establish and promote school counseling in South Korea.

Despite the many concerns and challenges, there is an agreement that school counseling will play an important role in student development in South Korea. The rapid quantitative growth in school counseling clearly reflects this. The continuous support from policy makers, school administrators, and providers of training courses is critical to generate and maintain the significant positive effects of school counseling. With this support, the concerns and challenges that Korean school counseling is facing can become the catalysts for improved school counseling in South Korea.

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南韓的學校諮商：歷史發展、現況及展望

南韓的學校諮商正面對新的挑戰。儘管學校諮商師的人數增加了不少，對於學校諮商師的培訓、道德守則、身分角色，諮商模型和專業結構應該怎樣，國內仍未有共識。本文概述南韓學校諮商的歷史和現況，並探討學校諮商的當前問題和未來展望。